

REMARKS

With the addition of new claims 13 to 20 and the cancellation herein without prejudice of claim 6, claims 7 to 20 are pending in the present application, since claims 1 to 5 were previously canceled. It is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable, and reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested.

Applicants note with appreciation the acknowledgement of the claim for foreign priority and the indication that all of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

Applicants thank the Examiner for considering the previously filed Information Disclosure Statement, PTO-1449 paper, and cited references. Applicants submit herewith a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement and PTO-1449 paper. With respect to EP 0545 575 and EP 1 193 914, disclosed in the prior Information Disclosure Statement, but which was apparently not provided by the International Search Authority, the Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement and PTO-1449 paper includes a courtesy copy of the reference.

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claims 8 to 12 include allowable subject matter. In this regard, the Examiner will note that each of claims 8 (from which claims 9, 11, and 12 depend) and 10 has been rewritten herein in independent form and to include the subject matter of its respective base claim (by inclusion of one of the recited alternatives of canceled claim 6) and any intervening claim. Accordingly, claims 8 to 12 are in condition for immediate allowance.

The remaining rejected claims have been canceled herein, thereby rendering moot the remaining claim rejections.

Claims 13 to 20 have been added. Claims 13 to 20 do not add new matter and are supported by the present application, including specification, as originally filed. Claim 13 depends from claim 8 and is therefore allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 8. Claim 14 includes subject matter of claim 8, incorporating the other of the recited alternatives of canceled claim 6, so that claim 14 and its dependent claims 15 to 18 are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 8. Claim 19 includes subject matter of claim 10, incorporating the other of the recited alternatives of canceled claim 6, so that claim 19 and its dependent claim 20 are therefore allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 10.

Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of the claims as previously presented in a continuation patent application. Further, any disclaimer that may

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have occurred during the prosecution of this application is expressly rescinded as regards any subsequently filed patent application.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all of pending claims 7 to 20 are allowable. It is therefore respectfully requested that the rejections be withdrawn. Prompt reconsideration and allowance of the present application are therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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